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An Orthodox Preacher

which one cannot trace to other sources and so suspects of being Mr. Oppenheim himself:

The ironic spirit
Was our wet nurse,
And we milked her in the soft latitudes of the equator of dreams.

Comment is an anti-climax.

I am aware that certain persons admire Mr. Oppenheim's work. It is my own theory, however, that whether or not Whitman's philosophy had, of itself, any particular value or originality, it is not improved by repetitions, and restirings with alien platitudes. The belief that The People read poetry of whatever sort and can be aided and abetted thereby, and the other belief that those who do read poetry are in serious need of philosophical text-books, comfort and advice, are discarded conventions of the nineties. To those whose ears are refined by much music this pompous nothingness is an intrusion and an insult. We have heard broken echoes of the thin silver Christ who has lost his way in the mountains.

A. Y. W.

AN AMERICAN GEORGIAN

Poems About God, by John Crowe Ransom. Henry Holt & Co.

Mr. Ransom would be a good, if he were not quite so *brittle*, a poet. He would shine, although he is an American, among the English Georgians, with whom indeed he seems to have a sort of kinship, on account of his deliberately child-like method of presentation; but he suggests

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greater possibilities—possibilities which he may attain if he deserts what seems a studied attitude and writes with a real instead of a strained sincerity.

The first three stanzas of the first poem illustrate sufficiently well the sophisticated-naïve insouciance of the Georgian temper:

In dog-days plowmen quit their toil,
And frog-ponds in the meadows boil,
And grasses on the upland broil,
And all the coiling things uncoil,
And eggs and meats and Christians spoil.

A mile away the valley breaks
(So all good valleys do), and makes
A cool green water for hot heads' sakes,
And sundry, sullen dog-days' aches.

The swimmer's body is white and clean,
Is washed by a water of deepest green
The color of leaves in a starlight scene;
And it is as white as the stars between.

The poem called *Sunset* (apart from the line containing the word *adjectival*), and possibly *The Ingrate*, exhibit his skill at its best. In these he captures the sense of a scene, his *own* scene, with no small degree of individuality; and one admires his terse phrasing, as well as his sensitive perception of the psychology of a mood.

A second book by Mr. Ransom will tip the balance one way or the other. Either he will repeat the present vein, which will hardly be worth while, or he will do something different, and better. Either he will not count, or he will count quite significantly.

A. C. H.